

by 35% and Fremont County has grown by 8%. In the visitor survey taken at the park, 21% of the survey respondents said they live nearby the park. This population growth in the area, however, will not be the largest factor in increasing visitation.

Increased visibility of the park's entrance on the highway, additional overnight lodging opportunities and expanded trail opportunities will undoubtedly attract additional visitors to the park. It is expected that visitation at the park will steadily increase at a rate of 2-5% each year as current park patrons continue to visit the park and new visitors discover its treasures.



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### Park Significance

Harriman State Park of Idaho has been referred to as the “crown jewel” of Idaho State Parks. The park’s establishment marks the beginning of the Idaho State Park system. The gift of the park to the State of Idaho is a testament to the Harriman family’s legacy of philanthropy and resource preservation. Harriman State Park of Idaho offers a unique combination of history, culture, environment and recreation.

The Railroad Ranch’s history is woven with the history of some of this country’s most wealthy and influential families. The ranch provides a glimpse of how American aristocracy like the Guggenheims and Harrimans lived and recreated. In addition, the ranch exemplifies the west’s ranching heritage. Here visitors can stay in historic accommodations and get a feel for what life was like in the early 1900’s.

The ranch’s location was selected for its spectacular setting and

scenery. Now visitors have a unique opportunity to recreate in these beautiful, serene surroundings. The Henrys Fork, which flows through the park, is nationally and internationally known as a fly-fishing “mecca.” This picturesque blue ribbon trout stream has been designated the best trout fishing stream in the West. In addition to fishing, the park also provides a diverse range of year-round recreational opportunities including multi-use non-motorized trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding and cross-country skiing, as well as picnicking and nature photography.

Harriman State Park of Idaho’s ecologically rich environment is located in an internationally renowned resource area (Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem). This designated refuge not only offers an incredible array of wildlife viewing opportunities, but it serves as a laboratory for conservation and research.

### Park Classification

#### Park Classification System

The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation has adopted a



classification system establishing four park categories (*IDPR, State Park Classification and Resource Area Designation System, 1999*). They are: Natural Park, Recreation Park, Heritage Park, and Recreation Trailway. Each classification has unique criteria, a distinct purpose, compatible uses, appropriate development intensity, and specific management principles. In determining the classification of a park, consideration is also given to any national, state and regional designations, which may already exist in regard to the park. A classification system allows the programming, orderly development and appropriate use of the park lands based on management policies.

### **Classification of Harriman State Park of Idaho**

Harriman State Park of Idaho has numerous values, including historical, natural and recreational. The ranching heritage of the park represents a significant portion of its history. In fact, the ranch building complex has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places as an historic district. However, it was the wildlife and the scenic beauty of the Railroad Ranch that brought the

Harrimans to Idaho, and likewise, it was the preservation of the wildlife and the scenic beauty of the ranch that caused them to donate it to the State of Idaho to

become a state park. Therefore, Harriman State Park of Idaho has been classified a Natural Park.

### **Natural Park Purpose**

A *Natural Park* is established to maintain the ecological integrity of areas of Idaho possessing exceptional resource values that illustrate Idaho's natural history. A *Natural Park* provides for the use and enjoyment of these resources in a manner that will enhance the understanding, appreciation and stewardship of these resources for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

### **Desired Visitor Experiences**

Visitors to a *Natural Park* will be offered the opportunity to find solitude, a leisure atmosphere, observation/study of natural features, positive experiences in natural surroundings, and a friendly and safe environment. This includes the development of personal outdoor ethics, development of knowledge of natural processes, and opportunities for directed and/or independent study.

### **Resource and Site Qualifications**

A *Natural Park* must contain natural resources of statewide significance. Statewide significance means that the unit contains unique, natural values of sufficient extent and importance to meaningfully contribute to the broad illustration of the state's natural history. These include natural (botanical, zoological, and geological) and scenic qualities, which are both beautiful and representative of the state.





A *Natural Park* should be sufficiently comprehensive to allow effective management of a community of indigenous flora and fauna. A *Natural Park* should also provide a variety of opportunities for public enjoyment in a natural setting with minimum negative effect to the resource.

A park may contain resource values other than those for which the park received its overall classification. These secondary resources should be of a lesser magnitude than the resources for which the park received its overall classification. The use and protection of these secondary resources will be addressed by subsequent resource area designations. The existence of these secondary resources should not unduly affect the determination of the overall park classification. *Natural Parks* should be established where significant and unique aspects of the state's natural resources exist.

### **Management Principles**

#### Resource Management -

Management will be directed at maintaining the ecological integrity and interpreting the natural values of the unit. Management will seek to maintain balance in the ecological community and reestablish missing elements of that community, such as indigenous plant and animal life to the extent practical.

Compatible Uses - Visitor use includes both interpretation and outdoor recreation in a natural setting. In addition to being an outdoor classroom, a *Natural Park*

is a place for participating in those outdoor recreational activities which can be accommodated without detriment to the natural character and features of the park and do not detract in any

way from the natural scene. In the broad sense, park use falls predominantly in the aesthetic portion of the recreational spectrum. *Natural Parks* are not intended to accommodate all forms or unlimited volumes of recreation use.

Compatible uses could include hiking, interpretive programming, nature study, individual camping, group camping, picnicking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, equestrian use, boating, swimming and other recreational pursuits which do not significantly degrade from the natural process or aesthetic qualities of the area.

Physical Developments - Facilities required for the health, safety, and protection of users, as well as those consistent with compatible uses shall be provided. Location, scale and design of all facilities shall be complementary to the environment and to the values being preserved. Facilities should support customer services, enhance the visitor's experience and provide for staff operational needs. Typical development might include: group campgrounds, individual campsites, lodges, marina facilities, boat





launches, swimming beaches, visitor/interpretive centers, program areas, trails, trailhead facilities, staff housing areas, maintenance

yards, and other similar facilities.

## **Park Mission & Vision Statements**

Whereas the vision statement provides a desired future condition of a park, the mission describes the park's current focus. The mission statement is reviewed regularly by park staff to check that its focus is accurately described.

### **Park Mission Statement**

"To conserve those natural and cultural resources of the park, and the surrounding refuge, that originally interested eastern investors to develop this western recreational retreat. To interpret those resources for all generations, showing the Harriman's unique 'Man in Harmony with the Land' approach to management. To provide for the protection and safety of the visitors through professionally trained and skilled personnel."

### **Park Vision Statement**

"We envision Harriman State Park of Idaho to be a model of natural and cultural resource stewardship where high quality, experience-based outdoor

education and recreation opportunities abound. We envision expanded and enhanced recreational opportunities within the Henrys Fork/Mesa Falls Recreation Corridor, made possible through comprehensive recreational planning and the Island Park community trail linkages."

## **Harriman State Park of Idaho Master Plan Goals & Objectives**

The following goals and objectives for Harriman State Park of Idaho were developed from analyzing the mission and vision statements, the resource inventory, and the initial input from both the public and department staff. The goals and objectives were refined in response to public input received on the preliminary management concepts.

### ***A. Visitor Contact and Distribution***

#### **Goal A1 – Enhance the park entrance and provide for fee collection.**

A1.1 Designate the Railroad Ranch entrance as the "main entrance" of the park and provide it with the most extensive signing. Provide additional entrance, information and orientation signs at other areas of the park. Request additional signage from the Idaho Transportation Department be placed along Highway 20 for Harriman State Park of Idaho.

A1.2 Create a major park entrance at the intersection of Green Canyon Road and Highway 20 that will make passersby aware

of the park's location and invite them to come in.

A.1.3 Construct a log crossbeam ranch entrance gate, similar to the one at the original ranch entry, at the main Railroad Ranch entrance off Green Canyon Road.

A1.4 Primarily collect park entry fees in the visitor center at the Railroad Ranch. During times when the visitor center is closed, entry fees will be placed in a self-serve fee station outside the visitor center. Place self-serve fee stations at parking areas on other Harriman-managed properties outside the Railroad Ranch.

A1.5 Pursue the transfer of management of the fishing access at Last Chance with the U.S. Forest Service.

#### **Goal A2. Provide for access, circulation and parking.**

A2.1 Reroute and pave the main entry road into the park from its current location off Green Canyon Road to a point farther west, at or near the historic ranch entry.

A2.2 Improve the quality and provide dust abatement on roads within the park. Manage roads to help people differentiate between public access and service roads.

A2.3 Redesign and enlarge the visitor center parking area to serve as a major trailhead for the park.

A2.4 Provide summer parking at the Sage Flats fishing access, Ranch View, near the dormitory, at the Osborne boat launch and near the

Fish Pond fishing access.

A2.5 Provide winter parking for snowmobilers adjacent to the trail that travels Green Canyon Road and crosses Harriman East.

A2.6 Create a special parking pass for senior and disabled citizens to park at the dormitory parking lot.

A2.7 Work with the U.S. Forest Service to identify and improve access to portions of Harriman East off of Highway 47.

A2.8 Explore alternative transportation systems within the park.

A2.9 Continue the management agreement with the U.S. Forest Service for winter trailhead parking and access at Bear Gulch.

#### **Goal A3 – Enhance the park visitor center.**

A3.1 Enlarge the existing park headquarters to incorporate all visitor center functions.

A3.2 Provide an outdoor plaza or gathering place at the visitor center.

### ***B. Education and Interpretation***

#### **Goal B1 – Provide education and interpretive programs.**

B1.1 Continue to partner with other public and private entities outside the park to provide interpretive programs.

### **Origins of the Railroad Ranch**

*An excerpt from "Harriman—From Railroad Ranch to State Park"*

*by Mary E. Reed and Keith C. Petersen*

The Railroad Ranch began simply enough. In the 1890s investors purchased land in Island Park and in 1902 incorporated the Island Park Land and Cattle Company (IPL&CC) to raise and sell livestock. Equally important, they regarded their ranch as a sporting retreat, and company bylaws reserved hunting, fishing and camping privileges for incorporators and guests.

The Oregon Short Line railroad employed most of the original owners—William Bancroft and Silas Eccles being most prominent—giving the place its popular name, the Railroad Ranch.

Bancroft, vice president and general manager of the Oregon Short Line, later served as general manager of the Union Pacific Railroad before working directly for Edward H. Harriman. Eccles, traffic manager for the Oregon Short Line, entered the smelting and refining business in 1900. Soon afterwards the Guggenheim family hired him and in 1905, when the Guggenheims won control of the American Smelting and Refining Company, they placed him on its board of directors. Later, as company vice president, he occupied a desk at Guggenheim Brothers' corporate headquarters. Bancroft and Eccles encouraged the Guggenheim and Harriman families to invest in the Railroad Ranch.

Shortly after incorporating the IPL&CC, three owners, Bancroft, Eccles, and James Anderson—longtime ranch superintendent—acquired lots and constructed buildings. In 1906 three Guggenheim brothers purchased ranch lots, beginning its history as a getaway for wealthy easterners.





B1.2 Provide a strong outdoor educational program that includes, but is not limited to, environmental education programs for school children, education/interpretive Jr. Ranger programs, evening programs, interpretive tours, resource education programs, historical interpretation programs, living history programs and overnight educational opportunities.

B1.3 Balance the interpretive themes of the park among natural, historical, cultural and geological programming, integrating all park sites into the education/interpretive programming.

B1.4 Keep livestock on site at the Railroad Ranch for special events and historic character in keeping with the ranching heritage.

**Goal B2 – Provide education and interpretive facilities.**

B2.1 Define the living history infrastructure for the park.

B2.2 Utilize the dormitory for overnight lodging for educational groups as well as other visiting public. Provide dining space for the dormitory users nearby. Design this facility to blend with the historic character of the Harriman historic district.

B2.3 Retain the self-guided interpretive trail at Ranch View. Redesign or update interpretive exhibits as needed.

B2.4 Remove the information kiosk at Ranch View and provide a simple group shelter for outdoor education programs and picnicking.

B2.5 Continue to use the Boys House for meeting space and educational programs.

B2.6 Closely manage interpretive signage on the Railroad Ranch for historic aesthetics. Modify the interpretive outdoor exhibit in the ranch building complex to blend with the surrounding historic area.

B2.7 Construct a replica of the original big shop/blacksmith shop at or near its original location.

***C. Natural and Cultural Resources***

**Goal C1 – Provide natural resource stewardship.**

C1.1 Continue to partner with other agencies and non-profit conservation organizations for natural resource conservation at the park and related areas.

C1.2 Work with the U.S. Forest Service on active vegetation



management for resource and aesthetic values.

C1.3 Work to define how grazing relates to vegetation management.

C1.4 Continue the grazing program at Harriman State Park of Idaho under close management.

C1.5 Continue to manage resources to preserve threatened and endangered species and species of special concern.

C1.6 Develop a natural resource management plan that addresses grazing, noxious weed control and other public concerns.

C1.7 Work to avoid light pollution and preserve the dark sky environment in and around Harriman State Park of Idaho.

### **Goal C2 – Provide cultural resource stewardship.**

C2.1 Continue to work with the State Historic Preservation Office on historic site and structure preservation, restoration and/or rehabilitation of historic buildings, and on the cataloging and preservation of artifacts.

C2.2 Develop a cultural resource management plan that addresses archaeological aspects, historic features and other public concerns.

### ***D. Recreation Opportunities***

#### **Goal D1 – Enhance picnicking opportunities.**

D1.1 Upgrade picnic facilities and ensure that at least one site at

each location will be designed for ADA accessibility.

D1.2 Place benches, rather than tables, among the buildings in the historic district for informal picnicking and resting areas.

D1.3 Re-site picnic tables at the Sage Flat fishing access parking area so that they have an unobtrusive view of the river.

D1.4 Provide a simple group shelter and additional tables at Ranch View.

D1.5 Provide a picnic/outdoor interpretive area at the park's visitor center.

D1.6 Provide picnicking opportunities at the Fish Pond area on Harriman East.

#### **Goal D2 – Enhance fishing opportunities.**

D2.1 Maintain catch and release fly-fishing only fishing regulations for the Railroad Ranch stretch of the Henrys Fork.



D2.2 Make a formal request to Fish & Game to extend the fishing season to run from June 15 to November 30.

D2.3 Maintain the fishing ban on Golden and Silver Lakes.

D2.4 Maintain the general regulation fishing season on Fish Pond. Promote Fish Pond for family and children's fishing opportunities. Provide an ADA accessible fishing site at Fish Pond.

D2.5 Make a formal request to Fish & Game to approve catch and release fishing on Sheridan Creek.

### **Goal D3 – Enhance boating opportunities.**

D3.1 In that the Henrys Fork is a navigable stream, continue to permit non-motorized boats and flotation devices to float the entire stretch of the Henrys Fork through Harriman State Park. However, the park will monitor boating use. If problems arise, staff will explore legislation to restrict boating on the Henrys Fork from Last Chance to Osborne Bridge.

D3.2 Maintain the boating ban on Golden and Silver Lakes to protect nesting swans.

D3.3 Permit non-motorized boating on Fish Pond.

D3.4 Work with the Forest Service to improve the Riverside Campground and other boat access/take out points on the Henrys Fork.

### **Goal D4 – Enhance recreational trail opportunities.**

D4.1 Prepare a Trails Management Plan to supplement the master plan and address specific issues, such as, a management strategy for existing trails (e.g. rehabilitation, closure, other); resource protection in relation to trails; trail construction methods and surface materials; potential separation of mountain biking and equestrian use and methods for implementation (e.g., signs, education, trailhead separation, other); possible expansion of hiking, equestrian, mountain biking and skiing trails; trailhead parking at Harriman East for snowmobilers; expansion of Harriman State Park of Idaho trail system to link all park properties together; trailhead locations in relation to the visitor center and other destination areas; a potential underpass crossing at Highway 20 to facilitate trail usage between the Railroad Ranch and Harriman East, as well as snowmobile usage along Green Canyon Road; partnerships with the Forest Service to continue to provide a quality trail system through the Harriman Wildlife Refuge; potential expansion of summer (mountain bike, equestrian, hiking) and winter (cross-country ski and snowshoe) trails along Thurmon Ridge; partnerships with other public agencies and private landowners to



establish a year-round non-motorized trail system from Harriman State Park of Idaho, north through Island Park, to the Buffalo River and south from Harriman State Park of Idaho through the Mesa Falls Recreation Area to Bear Gulch; and exploration of methods for a more equitable distribution of fees to cover trail management, ensuring that each user group is paying their fair share.

**D4.2** Maintain all trails within the Railroad Ranch as non-motorized except the snowmobile crossing in Harriman East and along the north boundary of Railroad Ranch, which is part of the Fremont County snowmobile program.

#### **Goal D5 – Enhance equestrian facilities.**

**D5.1** Retain equestrian activities as part of the historic Harriman experience.

**D5.2** Continue the horseback riding concession for the public. If the resource becomes over impacted, the operation will be modified. Move the concession operation to the cow barn.

**D5.3** Provide for a separation between public and concession equestrian activities through trail and trailhead designations.

**D5.4** Explore alternative trailheads for equestrians.

**D5.5** Provide a camping area for equestrians in conjunction with at least one equestrian trailhead within the corridor.



#### **Goal D6 – Provide warming spaces.**

**D6.1** Continue to provide warming space and gathering venue at the Jones House.

**D6.2** Consider provision of warming space at the visitor center/headquarters/trailhead.

**D6.3** Identify additional warming space locations in the Trails Management Plan.

#### **Goal D7 – Provide lodging/camping opportunities**

**D7.1** Balance the use of the historic buildings to provide for both interpretation and lodging.

**D7.2** Utilize up to four historic buildings, plus the dormitory, for overnight visitor lodging.

**D7.3** Provide a new dining facility for the dormitory, should the bunkhouse become visitor lodging. Utilize the cookhouse as a dining facility for bunkhouse lodgers.

D7.4 Work with the Forest Service on the provision of managed camping opportunities within the Mesa Falls Recreation Corridor.

D7.5 Maintain yurts in their current location near Silver Lake until the Trails Management Plan is completed.

D7.6 Accommodate some level of overnight use near Fish Pond on Harriman East.

### ***E. Maintenance and Operation***

#### **Goal E1 – Provide a stewardship level of park maintenance.**

E1.1 Establish preventative maintenance standards and a maintenance schedule for park facilities, where needed

E1.2 Establish preventative maintenance standards and a maintenance schedule for park antiquities.

E1.2 Maintain maintenance site adjacent to park headquarters.

#### **Goal E2 – Provide staff housing in the park.**

E2.1 Provide housing for at least two full-time staff members near park headquarters.

E2.2 Evaluate the location of current year-round and seasonal staff housing near the headquarters and at the main ranch and determine the most appropriate housing based on location, artifact safety, historic resource preservation, costs and overall park management.

#### **Goal E3 – Safeguard the viewshed from the river from the intrusion of incompatible visual elements.**

E3.1 Whenever possible, pull signs and facilities back from the river's edge.

#### **Goal E4 – Provide long-term and short-term volunteer service opportunities.**

**Goal E5 – Provide certain retail opportunities, such as the park gift shop, for the public. However the park will not attempt to compete with existing private retail enterprise outside the park boundaries.**

